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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [TU](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: KARAMANLIS DEFENDS FOREIGN POLICY AGAINST
PARLIAMENTARY NAYSAYERS

Classified By: DCM DEBORAH MCCARTHY. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In a March 12 unscheduled Parliamentary debate, PM Karamanlis defended his government's foreign policy, noting that its "red lines" on the Macedonia name issue remained unchanged, as did its insistence that Turkey must comply fully with all EU obligations for accession. Main opposition PASOK leader Papandreou accused the New Democracy government of passivity in foreign affairs and reducing Greece's foreign policy to an ongoing search for a "protector," one day in the U.S., the next in Russia, the next in France. Far right LAOS leader Karatzaferis called on the government not to purchase U.S.-built fighter jets and demanded two referenda: one on the Macedonia name issue and one on Greek support for Turkey's EU accession. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) The debate was prompted by a motion of far-right LAOS party leader Karatzaferis, who complained both ruling ND and main opposition PASOK were competing to show would could be the "better friend" of the Americans. Karatzaferis attacked FM Bakoyannis personally for allowing Greece's foreign affairs to be subordinated to her own goals. The LAOS firebrand called on PM Karamanlis not to allow the purchase of U.S.-built fighter jets and demanded a referendum on the Macedonia name issue and one on Greece's support of Turkey' EU bid.

¶3. (SBU) PM Karamanlis defended his government's foreign policy, noting that the GOG observed certain "inviolable red lines" but wanted to improve relations with all nations. He warned that "FYROM" (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) was barring its own way to entry into Euro-Atlantic institutions through its provocative stance on the name issue. The PM underscored that "FYROM" would not enter the Euro-Atlantic family without a solution to the name issue.

¶4. (SBU) On Greece's relations with Turkey, Karamanlis noted that while Turkey had undertaken some reforms required for EU accession, it had failed to take other "fundamental and necessary" steps, especially those relating to stopping illegal immigration. At the same time, Karamanlis emphasized that Turkey's full compliance with EU obligations should result in full EU membership and that only full compliance could counter the views of those urging a "special" second-class relationship for Turkey with the EU. Time, Karamanlis said, was working against Turkey's European prospects.

¶5. (SBU) PASOK leader Papandreou blasted the government for taking an essentially passive stance in foreign affairs. He referred repeatedly to the current economic downturn and ND's failure to stem the country's decline domestically and in the international arena. Papandreou accused the GOG of lacking a plan and having reduced foreign policy to a constant search for a "protector" foreign power: one day the U.S., the next

Russia, the next France. "You believe that inaction equals zero risk, (but) it is in inaction and lack of initiative that risk and danger lurk." Leftist SYRIZA leader Alavanos piled on, noting that President Obama's planned visit to Turkey demonstrated that Greece's neighbor "has a foreign policy, while Greece has not."

SPECKHARD